Capitol Hill Photo Finish! --- GOP Tea Partier Eric Cantor Falls Just 212 Votes Short Of Winning House Speakership

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Michael Matthew Bloomer, January 3, 2013

Of the 427 votes cast, including one for "Present," Eric Cantor nearly pulled off a palace coup by defeating John Boehner for the Speakership of the 113th Congress just convened today. Here's the House Clerk's Office report: [1. House Roll Call 2, 113th Congress, Office of the Clerk, U.S. House of Representatives, Jan. 3, 2012]

1:41:52 P.M. Roll call 2 - Election of the Speaker Mr. Boehner: 220, Ms. Pelosi: 192, Cantor: 3, West: 2, Cooper of Tennessee: 2, Lewis of Georgia: 1, Powell: 1, Labrador: 1, Jordan: 1, Walker: 1, Amash: 1, Dingell: 1, and Present: 1. Mr. Boehner was elected Speaker of the House.

Cantor's finish within shouting range of Mr. Boehner was a solid moral victory for the Tea Party backbench coalition. Rumors of the declining power of the group following the recent election appear to be quite premature. Following the Speakership vote, Minnesota Congresswoman Michele Bachmann, founder of the Tea Party Caucus, analyzed the outcome

> "Only a concerted effort by the House Democrat party to block Mr. Cantor kept him from the Speaker's chair. Nancy Pelosi and other socialist Members met late into the night to conspire to place her name into contention, and Democrats, as always, bowed down to her wishes and 192 of them voted for her. This alone once again put at the head of the House John Boehner, a man more and more influenced by orange complected Tanzanian socialistic fascist golfers. It is a sad day for us, oh, and freedom too."

For her part, Nancy Pelosi was once again elected Minority Leader. When reached for a comment about her alleged conspiracy to keep Eric Cantor from the Speakership, she was characteristically candid:

> "Yes, yes. I did it. I forced my fellow Democrats to vote as I wished them to. When threats and intimidation didn't work, I brought in some Brooklyn and Chicago muscle, some goons, toothless goons. In the end, I won. I said, "Eric Cantor is never going to be Speaker," and I was right. And - who knew? - *I* was nearly elected Speaker! Just a handful of votes behind. *I* had a good day. Cantor? Not so good."

Others in the running for Speaker included Colin Powell (1 vote); Congressloon Raul Labrador (1); Former Congressloon Alan West (2); Old-timer Democrat John Dingell (1); and one vote for an individual named "Present" whose background could not be uncovered, and who could not be reached for comment.